

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 ACDA-07 /078 W
-----061811Z 084787 /45

R 061525Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5976
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
DIA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY LONDON
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USNMR SHAPE BEL
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1500

USCINCEUR AND USDOCOSOUTH FOR POLAD; BRUSSELS FOR USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CY
SUBJECT: CLERIDES REBUTS (USURPATION" CHARGES

REF: (A) NICOSIA 1491 (DTG 021430Z JUN 77); (B) NICOSIA 1356
(DTG 231200Z MAY 77)

1. IN WRITTEN STATEMENT ISSUED JUNE 4, DEMOCRATIC RALLY LEADER
AND FORMER HOUSE PRESIDENT CLERIDES STRONGLY REBUTTED CHARGES
THAT HE USURPED POWER FOLLOWING THE COUP (REFTELS). HE HAD
ASSUMED PRESIDENTIAL DUTIES, CLERIDES ARGUED, AT THE BEHEST OF
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POLITICAL LEADERS FROM ALL PARTIES AND EVERYTHING HE HAD DONE
HAD BEEN AIMED AT SALVAGING CYPRUS FROM THE TURKISH INVASION,
RESTORING CALM AND UNITY, AND AVOIDING FURTHER BLOODSHED.
ACKNOWLEDGING THAT HISTORY WOULD BE THE FINAL JUDGE, CLERIDES
STRESSED THAT HIS CONCILIATORY POLICIES HAD HELD THE COUNTRY
TOGETHER, MADE POSSIBLE THE RETURN OF THE LEGAL PRESIDENT,
AND WON HIM EXPRESSIONS OF PRAISE AND THANKS FROM GREEK PRIME

MINISTER KARAMANLIS, MAKARIOS (ON HIS RETURN IN DECEMBER 1974),
AND THE GOC HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES (IN A 1974 RESOLUTION).

2. IN DEFENDING HIS RECORD AND INTENTIONS, CLERIDES ALSO
MAINTAINED THAT IN 1973 ANOTHER COUP WAS BEING PLANNED,
THAT HE VISITED THE U.S. EMBASSY WITH MAKARIOS' KNOWLEDGE
TO SEEK U.S. ACTION, AND THAT THE COUP WAS FOILED AS A
RESULT OF THAT "TIMELY INTERVENTION." (COMMENT: OUR COL-
LECTIVE EMBASSY MEMORY DOES NOT RECALL 1973 EPISODE TO WHICH
CLERIDES ALLUDED. IT IS POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, THAT CLERIDES
MISSPOKE WHEN HE SAID 1973 AND THAT HE WAS REFERRING TO U.S.
ACTIONS IN 1972 WHEN U.S. WAS INVOLVED IN DEFUSING AN
APPARENT JUNTA ATTEMPT TO UNSEAT MAKARIOS.)

3. WE SENSE THAT PUBLIC INTEREST IN THE LYSSARIDES-KYPRIANOU-
CLERIDES EXCHANGES IS RELATIVELY LOW. MOST PEOPLE HAVE MADE
UP THEIR MINDS ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, WITH MAJORITY HAVING CON-
CLUDED THAT CLERIDES, DESPITE MISTAKES HE MAY HAVE MADE, IN
FACT AVERTED FURTHER VIOLENCE AND PAVED WAY FOR MAKARIOS'
RETURN. NEVERTHELESS, LYSSARIDES' TA NEA, IN EFFORT TO KEEP
ISSUE ALIVE, IN WEEKEND EDITORIAL VICIOUSLY BRANDED CLERIDES
"A USURPER" AND SAID THE CALL FOR UNITY IS HYPOCRITICAL
AS THERE CAN BE NO UNITY WITH "USURPERS, TROJAN HORSES,
OR THE BRIDGEHEADS OF FOREIGN INTERESTS." LYSSARIDES
SAID CLERIDES REFERENCE TO U.S. ROLE IN ALLEGEDLY HELPING
TO PREVENT A COUP IN 1973 SIMPLY PROVED U.S. INVOLVEMENT
WITH JUNTA WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN USED TO THWART 1974 COUP
HAD U.S. WANTED.

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4. CONSERVATIVE AGHON, ON THE OTHER HAND, SUPPORTED
MAKARIOS' APPEAL FOR UNITY. INDEPENDENT SIMERINI SAID
USURPATION OF POWER QUESTION ENDED IN THE SAME "DEPLORABLE"
WAY IT BEGAN; CRITICIZED MAKARIOS FOR LETTING THE DISCUSSION
DEVELOP; AND CALLED ON MAKARIOS TO "CHECK THE CONTRA-
DICTIONS AND INCONSISTENCIES" DEVELOPING AROUND HIM.
CRAWFORD

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 06-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977NICOSI01500
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770201-0298
Format: TEL
From: NICOSIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770687/aaaacyjt.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d63f3984-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 NICOSIA 1491, 77 NICOSIA 1356
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2263399
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CLERIDES REBUTS (USURPATION" CHARGES
TAGS: PINT, CY, (CLERIDES, GLAFCOS)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d63f3984-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009